

# Village at West Main breaks the barriers to affordable housing in Franklin

By Kerri Bartlett • Managing Editor, *Williamson Herald*

Oct 12, 2017

The Village at West Main development broke through barriers today, bringing affordable-priced housing to Franklin during a Golden Hammer ceremony, celebrating the start of the development.

The condominium development will soon be home to those who wish to live in the city in which they “work and play,” including a few teachers, a grandfather who wants to live closer to his grandchildren, a previous Franklin Housing Authority (FHA) resident, who can now afford his own home and even an empty-nester, who wishes to downsize, but stay close to Franklin’s downtown.

The units priced at \$152,950 to \$167,950 provide an unprecedented housing opportunity in Franklin, where land is expensive and the housing market soars each month, breaking records in median home prices.

Community Housing Partnership, led by executive director Steve Murray, brought the project to fruition through funding the \$4 million project in “the free market,” Murray said, with the help of loans from Pinnacle Bank and contractor Jimmy Franks of Old South Construction and Legacy Homes of Tennessee, who took on the project as the building contractor.

In August, the median sales price for condos grew 15.2 percent, reaching \$250,900, up from \$217,000 in July. Meanwhile, the median single-family home price in Franklin is \$474,162 as of September.

The three-story, 30-unit development on 2.65 acres at 620 square feet per unit, located directly across from the Williamson County Government Complex, has only two units left, Murray said.

The Franklin community has held many conversations on the issue of the lack of affordable and workforce housing, but leaders say The Village at West Main is a first step towards a solution.

“There is nothing else of its kind in Franklin,” said Trish Ingram of US Bank Home Mortgage, who serves as chairman of the CHP board of directors.

“Teachers are thrilled to move to Franklin and live close by.”

CHP Treasurer Beverly Petty called Murray “a pace-setter,” and Franklin Alderman Mike Skinner, 3rd Ward, thanked Murray for “having a vision,” and seeing it through.

“The board whole-heartedly supported this,” Petty said. “The blessings are the people, who will be going in and out of this complex. This is a project serving our citizens.”

“It feels really good to see this come to fruition,” Murray said, “to see people so supportive and people who helped make it happen.”

The county waived the privilege tax on the property and Murray went through Pinnacle Bank to take out a loan on the \$4 million project. CHP purchased the land, while Franks serves as the contractor.

Murray said he bought the 2.65-acre plat of land for \$275,000 four years ago.

“That would not be the case today,” Murray said.

City leaders and builders cite the price of land in Franklin as one of the main barriers in creating affordable and workforce priced housing.

However, Franks said the low price of the land and the partnership with CHP contributes to making the project possible.

“The land was purchased at really good price,” Franks said. “It’s a small lot. It’s an infill lot, and engineers were able to bring stability to the lot [that might not otherwise be a desirable lot to build on].”

“This is going to serve a lot of people in this county,” Franks said.

Williamson County Mayor Rogers Anderson, Franklin Mayor Ken Moore, elected-officials, and CHP board members participated in a Golden Hammer Ceremony in which the leaders hammered in the first nails on a wooden plank.

“We are excited about the potential and possibility of some of our workers to live here across the street,” Anderson said.

“Not only is it affordable but there’s the ability to be able to live and work in the same vicinity.”

“This is very much needed in our community. We’ve watched it go up block-by-block.”

Anderson's office window faces the property.

Moore said the development could set the stage for more of its kind.

“The Board of Mayor and Aldermen have been talking about housing for a long time,” Moore said.

“We have been studying it. We have a housing commission who has been working on it for a long time. Community Housing Partnership has caused the first ripple in the water for other projects like this one.

“This is the first part of the momentum in moving forward in housing in our community. We will continue to work to help bring these projects forward an into the future.”

The completion date is projected for April 2018.



*CHP Treasurer Beverly Petty, CHP staff Keith Reickman, CHP board chairman Trish Ingram, and Franklin Pastor Kevin Riggs celebrate the building phase of The Village at West Main development.*

Elected officials, Franklin city staff, and board members of the Community Housing Partnership participate in the Golden Hammer ceremony for the celebration of the building phase of The Village at West Main development.

*(From right) Alderman Dana McLendon, 2nd Ward; Vernon Gerth, assistant city administrator; chairman of CHP board Trish Ingram; Alderman Mike Skinner, 3rd Ward; Franklin Community Church Pastor Kevin Griffin; Franklin Mayor Ken Moore; CHP Treasurer Beverly Petty; Williamson County Mayor Rogers Anderson; and Old South Construction LLC builder Jimmy Franks.*





*CHP Treasurer Beverly Petty, Franklin Mayor Ken Moore and County Mayor Rogers Anderson participate in the Golden Hammer Ceremony for the celebration of the building phase of The Village at West Main development*